

**Asthma Discussion Meeting  
June 21, 2000**

In Attendance

**Lori Kaplan** – IDEM Commissioner  
**Cynthia Smothers** – Vanderburgh Co. HD  
**Margaret Fisher** – Methodist Hospital / AIRR  
**Amy Burns** – IDEM – NWRO  
**Tom Neltner** – IKE  
**Sheila Batka** – USEPA  
**Wendy Michalski** – ISDH – CHSCS  
**Adele Lash** – ISMA  
**Miranda Henry** – FSSA -- OMPP  
**Roland Gamache** – ISDH  
**Pat Troth** – IDEM --OAM  
**Dr. Ingrid Ritchie** – IUPUI  
**Dr. Judy Ganser** – ISDH  
**Donna Pond** – ALA  
**Tami Johnson** – IDEM  
**Ben Bambo (SR)** – IDEM – Americorps

**Allene Brown** – Methodist Hospital / AIRR  
**Dr. Fred Leickly** – Riley Hospital  
**Chadwick Appleman** – Allen Co HD  
**Mark Amick** – IDEM – OAM  
**Catherine Parker** – Marion Co. HD  
**Jeanette Marrero** – USEPA  
**Maryann Suero** – USEPA  
**Donna Hogle** – FSSA  
**Paula Smith** – IDEM – OPPTA  
**Janet McCabe** – IDEM  
**Becca Cross** – IDEM  
**Dr. Rae Schnappe** – HEC  
**Linda Ruskowski** – Community Hospital  
**Gregg Puls** – ALA  
**Tom McCue** – Allen Co. HD  
**Dr. Denise Ingram** – FSSA - Medicaid

Welcome – By Paula Smith

**Introductions**

**Opening Remarks- Commissioner, Lori Kaplan**

- Commissioner, Lori Kaplan welcomed and thanked the group for their participation thus far.
- Asthma is an important issue around the state. From the discussions of the brain storming session in March, we know there are some efforts being conducted for asthma but they are currently not being coordinated.
- IDEM has been busy working on a few efforts regarding asthma. I will mention them briefly and we will further mention them later in the discussion.
  - Grant to the Hoosier Environmental Council
  - EPA grant to IDEM to implement IAQ “Tools for Schools”
  - Office of Air Management Smog Watch information

**Packets-Paula Smith**

- Paula Smith went through the handouts that were in the packets.
- If you were not at the brainstorming session and would like a copy of any handouts, please contact Tami Johnson.
- Paula also discussed the agenda and briefly mentioned the discussion items.
- The green simple steps brochure that was passed out is going to have minor changes to include information on asthma.
- Paula did a brief recap of the brainstorming session.

**“It’s Going To Cost You,” Campaign-Indiana State Dept. of Health**

- Dr. Roland Gamache from the Indiana State Department of Health outlined the “It’s going to cost you” Campaign. The campaign tries to prevent children from smoking and targets 8 years of age and up. The campaign consists of several commercials of a cartoon character outlining the dangers of smoking. The focus of the commercials is to get rid of the “smoking is cool” attitude.
- The commercials are shown throughout 36 central Indiana counties.
- Packets of information have been sent to schools. Schools can obtain copies of the commercials to show on their announcements by calling Maryann Hurley at 233-7229.

### **Asthma Study-Hoosier Environmental Council**

- Dr. Rae Schnapp and Dr Ingrid Ritchie discussed their study (partially funded by IDEM), which hopes to determine the correlation between air pollution, specifically ozone and the number of children with asthma and emergency room visits. A copy of their study proposal was included in the packet. The study looks at children ages 1 to 17. The study is intended to determine whether increases in ozone concentrations result in hospital admissions, including both in-patient and outpatient (emergency room) admissions in the central Indiana area. ICD codes for respiratory admissions are used because not all asthma admissions are coded as asthma. The asthma data will be acquired from individual hospitals listed in the packets and the air quality data is acquired from IDEM. The demographic information includes zipcode, age and gender only. A major problem with the study is that hospitals are very protective of their information. St. Vincent's hospital is helping by creating a template of the questions to be asked of the other hospitals participating in the study.
- A sign up sheet was passed around for those interested in participating in serving as a peer review for the study. If any other is interested, please contact Dr. Rae Schnapp from the Hoosier Environmental Council.

### **Tools for Schools**

- Tami Johnson and members of the EPA Region 5 team talked about Tools for Schools. Four things are required for implementation of "Tools for Schools"
  1. indoor air quality coordinator or team
  2. checklist from the schools
  3. walkthrough
  4. management plan
- A sample kit was passed around.
- IDEM will also be integrating Tools for Schools training in Integrated Pest Management workshops that are currently being conducted through Purdue University. There are a total of 22 IPM workshops scheduled. These workshops are jointly sponsored by EPA and IDEM. Please see IDEM website if you are interested in attending [www.state.in.us/idem](http://www.state.in.us/idem)
- There is a marketing brochure for tools for schools available on the Internet at [www.isco.purdue.edu](http://www.isco.purdue.edu) under the publication section.
- Software packages of tools for schools will hopefully be available on the web by the end of the year. See the EPA website for more details at <http://www.epa.gov/iaq/schools>

### **OAM**

- Mark Amick from the Office of Air Management spoke about various programs from his office.
- You can view real-time data from ozone monitors located across the state via the Internet: <http://www.state.in.us/idem/oam/amb/data/ozone/region.htm>
- You can access the daily ozone forecasts via the Internet: <http://www.state.in.us/idem/oam/smog/>
- There is an educational campaign that attempts to distinguish between good ozone and bad ozone. There are tips for what to do on an ozone action day. A copy of the brochure was passed around.
- You can also access the Smog Watch ozone forecast by calling (800) 631-2871 or (317) 233-2318. Currently this is not automated, but work is being done to make it so.
- IDEM developed posters for the businesses that participate in the Partners for Clean Air Program. These posters can be displayed during ozone episodes. IDEM also provided artwork to outside organizations for billboards on ozone, but did not provide for the billboard space. A sample was passed around.
- Project LEAP (Learning Environmental Awareness Partnership) now includes an educational curriculum geared toward grades 3 – 8 with a chapter on ozone. The curriculum will be posted on the web hopefully by the end of August or early September. Feedback would be wonderful on outreach methods that work well for this sort of program. Thus far, better luck has been with print media rather than television.
- A suggestion was made that IDEM work with the DNR (Dept. of Natural Resources) to get information to State Parks. The YMCA, YWCA, summer day camps were also suggested to contact so they can access this information, too. OAM is to follow-up.

**Discussion Items**

- Tami Johnson went over the discussion plan that was developed from the brainstorming session back in March to get feedback on the direction the group should be going.

**Model Coalitions**

- Develop a model coalition to do outreach to local communities.
- We need to get the school nurses involved.
- Regions should work with their federal and state agencies.

**Targeted data collection.**

- A need for current asthma data is readily apparent.
- There is lots of information out there on asthma and it is a matter of compiling the information and researching the gaps. There are several programs that target asthma, so before a plan of action is suggested, research needs to be done in order to find out exactly where those gaps exist.
- The data collection methods were widely discussed already at the brainstorming session.

**Subgroups**

- Some people felt that it would be better to form subgroups first and then discuss actions within those areas before they decided what to do.
- Some felt it would be better to form specific goals for the subgroups to accomplish before developing the subgroups.
- Some people felt that one large program managed in different areas by subgroups would work out best.
- Breaking the school subgroup into two parts with school and public awareness as two separate groups was considered.
- Combining the data and environmental groups was also discussed.
- A suggestion that the Dept. of Education support the subgroup for schools was mentioned.
- IDEM does not have the expertise to chair the clinical/medical subgroup.
- Lists with the various subgroups were sent around so those individuals could express their interest in the subgroups. The subgroups were schools, environmental, clinical/medical, and data surveillance.

**Goals of the workgroup: What are we doing?**

- The scope of the state workgroup was debated.
- Some felt it better to start small and work toward encompassing the entire State of Indiana. Some wanted to start with the entire state as the focus area.
- A suggestion was made to focus on specific populations such as; migrants; children already diagnosed with asthma; undiagnosed children; asthma camps; children with special needs; parents of children with asthma; asthma screening programs; and headstart.
- Indoor air will not be covered by IDEM with the exception of “Tools for Schools” and parts of the 5-Star Environmental Program for Childcare Facilities. However, it was suggested that IDEM consider the indoor air quality because if we are sending people indoors on ozone action days, we need to address the indoor triggers as well.
- It was mentioned that some of the actions we were discussing were already being done on a local level.
- It was mentioned that the Governor’s Building Bright Beginnings” partnership chair the Statewide Asthma Workgroup.
- Some felt the reason we brought the big group together was to develop a template or model coalition to help communities develop their own task force, locally.
- The goals of the Gary task force that was formed was to reduce the length of stay in the hospital and reduce the number of return visits. Zip codes were also identified. Education and data subgroups were formed.

### **Hopes and goals for the asthma workgroup**

- The purpose of bringing the state wide group together in the first place was stated again.
- These were the suggestions that were mentioned that could be possibilities for the goals of an asthma statewide workgroup:
  1. To increase general public awareness of asthma.
  2. To make resources and education available to those who suffer from asthma.
  3. To have schools programs educating people about asthma.
  4. To see what data exists and incorporate it to define asthma related problems.
  5. To reduce return asthma-related emergency room visits, as well as length of hospital stay.
  6. To reduce the asthma burden in Indiana.
  7. To link ozone with asthma and other environmental factors.
  8. To integrate existing asthma programs with asthma data from hospitals and headstart programs.

### **The future: Where are we going from here?**

- It was suggested that three separate subgroups would meet.
- Chairpersons would be needed for each subgroup because IDEM does not have the resources/expertise to chair all the subgroups.
- At some point, we may consider bringing the large group back together.

Meeting adjourned 4:30 PM.